



# Room 1 Newsletter

## Term 1 2010



### Welcome

Di and I would like to welcome all new and existing pupils and parents to Room 1. As we have mentioned earlier, the initial part of this term will be taken up with testing so we can gauge where the children are at or have moved to, and areas we can work on.

This testing may include Running Records (reading), Snapshots (maths), Portfolio Samples (Handwriting, Written Language etc), PAT Standardised Tests, Spelling Tests, Basic Facts and so on. Once these have been completed the children will start with a more regular routine. This will include homework.

### Curriculum Areas:

**Written Language—** Ken will teach formal language while the children are writing. This includes Parts of Speech (nouns, verbs, metaphors, similes etc). He will also choose different genre (types of writing) e.g. poetry, letters to the editor, formal reports etc. Di will concentrate on using the dictionary guide words, plurals, antonyms, homophones, prefixes, suffixes etc.

This term we are working a new programme of Peer Writing. This has the children working together in pairs, with one child the "tutor" and the other is the "tutee". The tutor helps with story ideas, spelling, layout and so on, demonstrating correct techniques, encouraging the writer and recording progress.



**Reading:**

We are now sending home Instructional Reading Books for the children to practise. The children will already have read their story at school, so again it will only be reinforcement and practice at home. The whole story does not have to be read. Let them read a page, or read parts with them ( a paragraph each?). If you read to them, you are modelling good reading . Any type of reading is good ... newspapers, magazines, street signs, maps etc.

Thursdays – When Di is in the classroom—Reading will vary. We subscribe to the wonderful Newspapers in Education and we receive invaluable little newspapers with information and activities around a topic. We spend time in class reading and discussing these and they are sent home for the children to read and discuss further with you to deepen their understanding.

Di has set up a Reading Box for each child and there maybe times when they will bring books home from their box. The books in the boxes are made up of Journal stories that have already been read, Journals that have not been seen before plus some non-fiction books.

Sometimes a story chosen by your child to bring home to read will be one they have read before and have enjoyed or they may choose one that is read easily or maybe even a little difficult. Remember 'Reading is Reading' and should never be discouraged because a text may be seen as being too easy. If it is difficult please give your child the help they require and make it a positive session.

On a Friday we read a poem. This is put into a Poetry Anthology and comes home for your child to read and continue illustrating over the weekend. Di is also working through the 'Steps To Literacy' Programme which incorporates sounds and rules to help children understand the English Language.



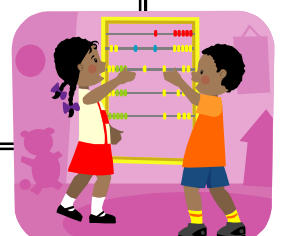
**Maths** – Math sheets (+ - or x) go home every night. The children need to practise these regularly. Time can be wasted by relearning basic facts or tables they already know, so focus on the ones they take longer with. At school they race against time. They start at 1 minute 30 seconds. If they get 19 or 20 right, their time gets reduced to 1 minute the next time and so on. Once they can complete the sheet in 20 seconds they have mastered the sheet and do not need to learn them. This is only one way we practise these, so try a variety of ways at home. These sheets need to be signed and dated. Di has daily number revision sheets which are used when she is in the classroom. The children begin their Maths sessions with Daily Number Revision. She has made up a booklet for each child and they will work through a different section each day. This has a variety of numeracy activities and provides good revision and recall of basic facts.

Di is responsible for the Statistics, Measurement and Geometry Maths Strands throughout the year.

### **Spelling:**

On a Friday Di helps the children make up a spelling list of words from their appropriate level to learn over the week. These are tested on a Friday. There is a procedure in everyone's spelling notebook on How to Learn to Spell a Word. While this seems to take time it is certainly an effective way to learn and to remember the spelling of a word. She would like to see the evidence that the children are learning their words by your input and ticking the words they learn each night. Thank you. On a Thursday the children's spelling activities are based around their current list of words. I test the children at the end of every month on their list words. Incorrect words become 'tough ones' and these words are learnt again. These are also put into your child's portfolio.

Certificates are presented as the children complete the level they have mastered and are confident to move onto the next level. An end of the month Spelling Test is administered to each child on their current level and it is always a good indication as to how well the children have learnt their words and how they retain them.



## **Homework**

We endeavour to keep homework to a minimum, however homework provides practice and skills that are essential later at secondary school. Choose a time that suits both your child and you. Our main focus for homework is Spelling, Reading and Maths (basic facts and tables). Di also has a homework sheet and this will be given to children after Daylight Saving ends.

The homework sheet, which builds on class work, will vary from time to time. It will consist of a sheet made up of a variety of topics or a General Knowledge sheet. It will be given to the children on a Thursday and must be returned anytime before the following Wednesday. This then gives me time to mark the children's work before I issue their new sheet on a Thursday. I realize some weeks can be very busy and children may not have time to complete their homework. However, I do like to see an attempt made. It is a matter of the children learning to use their organisational skills with something being achieved each night – a good habit for them to get into! I would appreciate it if you would make sure your child does this work in pencil so that errors can easily be rubbed out and a neat standard of work is maintained. I would also like you to take time to have a look at the work your child is doing and to give help where appropriate.

Homework set by Ken can be tested by other children before school if they could not get it completed the night before. They must tell Ken before they are tested. Ken's homework usually includes a maths sheet of basic facts or tables and instructional reading books.

Please remember we are always happy for you to contact us if you ever have any queries.

## **Room 1 Website:**

We hope to have our classroom website up and running this year. This will have information about what is happening in the class, children's work, homework, useful websites and much more.

Visit : **[alburyschoolroom1.wikispaces.com](http://alburyschoolroom1.wikispaces.com)**

## **Class Routines**

Routines are important, especially in a classroom setting. Our expectations should be no different than those at home. When the children arrive at school they are expected to put their chair down, take what they need out of their reading folder and put it away in the correct place. They then should put their vest and bag on their hook. Each child is responsible for beginning the day with a sharp pencil and their designated "job" completed.

The children also have daily responsibilities which they may have to complete at various times of the day. The "slave" is our helper/class leader for the week and is expected to be very organised and help the teachers whenever needed. They also begin the day by placing values folders and maths books on the desks.

At the end of the day the children gather their homework and complete any jobs they are assigned to do.

## **Mr Cuddles**

We have a very important member in the classroom – a Teddy Bear named by the children as 'Mr Cuddles' We have made up some classroom rules as to how he must be looked after. He has proved to be a great source of comfort and he can always be seen sitting on someone's knee or on someone's desk. The children are able to take him home on a week night. He is very precious and must be treated respectfully!



**Parent Meetings:**

We have two meetings through the year. The first is designed to discuss goals and any concerns for the year ahead as well as clarifying any issues. The second is a report on progress and discussion of where to next.

We also have Parent Information Evenings to inform parents about the School Curriculum.

**School Council:**

Each year the Year 6 children stand for the main positions on our School Council. They are selected by the children in the senior class. The council holds meetings throughout the year to discuss their thoughts about the school, to fund raise



for charities or for their own events. Events, that they organise, may be fun days, sports afternoons or even the school disco.

**Library** – Our class Library time is on a Friday afternoon so please ensure your child brings along books to be exchanged. Di endeavours to help each child choose appropriate books suited to their approximate reading age. She doesn't always get her way! However she does like two fiction books to be chosen alongside a non-fiction book.

**Communication:**

It is very important to maintain a good understanding between Home and School, so if you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at school. If more than a phone call is required, please contact the school office for a meeting time. We do our best to keep everyone informed. It is practical to organise this as soon as a problem or issue arises, as often there may be a lot un-said or another side to the story or situation. A discussion can be very important.

We are looking forward to a fun, rewarding year full of "Learning for Living"

Ken and Di